

CITY OF AUSTIN BUILDING PERMITS GUIDELINES FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

TEMPORARY STAGES AND PLATFORMS

Special event stages and platforms may be required to meet the requirements of the International Building Code, Chapter 4 “SPECIAL DETAILED REQUIREMENTS BASED ON USE AND OCCUPANCY”. To determine if this is a requirement of the City of Austin, you must contact Commercial Plan Review at 512-974-2355, or 512-974-2384 **well in advance of any event**. You may be required to provide a detailed set of architectural designed plans that may be required to be engineered.

TEMPORARY STRUCTURES

- Most events use standard-sized portable, mobile or riser stages. The use of standard four-foot by eight-foot (4' x 8') risers placed either at a single level or stacked, typically in eight inch (8") increments to create an elevated performance area typically does not require review by building officials.
- Use of portable trailers and mobile units is common and typically does not require a building permit if the stages remain affixed to the wheels of the vehicle and a license plate is affixed to the vehicle. If footings or a foundation are affixed to the ground, a building permit may be required.
- If your event plans include elevated platforms, walkways, seating areas or stages for use by the general public that include a finished floor that is more than **thirty inches above the lowest adjacent grade or floor**, you will be required to obtain a building permit.
- **General.** The provisions of the International Building Code Sections 3103.1 through 3103.4 shall apply to structures erected for a period of less than 180 days. Tents and other membrane structures erected for a period of less than 180 days shall comply with the *International Fire Code*. Those erected for a longer period of time shall comply with applicable sections of this code.
- Temporary structures that cover an area greater than 120 square feet, including connecting areas or spaces with a common *means of egress* or entrance which are used or intended to be used for the gathering together of 10 or more persons, shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without obtaining a *permit* from the *building official*.
- **Construction documents.** A *permit* application and *construction documents* shall be submitted for each installation of a temporary structure. The *construction documents* shall include a site plan indicating the location of the temporary structure and information delineating the *means of egress* and the *occupant load*.
- **Location.** Temporary structures shall be located in accordance with the requirements of the International Building Code *Table 602* based on the *fire-resistance rating* of the *exterior walls* for the proposed type of construction.
- **Means of egress.** Temporary structures shall conform to the *means of egress* requirements of Chapter 10 and shall have an *exit access* travel distance of 100 feet (30 480 mm) or less.

- **Handrails, risers and treads** must comply with the requirements of the International Building Code *Chapter 10*.
- All stages must be accessible and meet local, state and federal disability access laws including, but not limited to, the use of ramps, lifts, and safety handrails. Many portable stage units comply with accessibility requirements, but it is your responsibility to ensure that your event plans meet all accessibility requirements.
- The Building Official may require a State of Texas Licensed Engineered design and approval prior to the use of a stage or platform.

RESTROOMS

The City of Austin recommends one (1) chemical or portable toilet for every 50 people. The number of portable toilets can be determined based on your estimated peak time attendance. You must provide portable restroom facilities at your event unless you can substantiate the sufficient availability of both accessible and non-accessible facilities in the immediate area of the event site that will be available to the public during your event.

RESTROOM ACCESSIBILITY

Ten percent (10%) of restroom facilities must meet local, state, and federal accessibility requirements. No less than one (1) accessible restroom should be placed in each location designated for restrooms facilities and located on a level area not to exceed a 2% cross-slope in any direction. If a single restroom unit is placed in a location, it must be accessible. An accessible route to each portable restroom must be provided.

Accessible Restrooms/Sinks

- A minimum of 10% of any portable restroom provided to support your event must be accessible and located on a level area not to exceed a 2% cross-slope in any direction.
- In any location where multiple restrooms are provided, at least one (1) unit must be accessible.
- If only one (1) restroom is placed in a location, it must be accessible.
- In any location where multiple sinks or hand sanitizing units are provided, at least one (1) unit must be accessible.
- If only one (1) sink or hand-sanitizing unit is placed in a location, it must be accessible.
- An accessible route to each portable restroom and sink or hand-sanitizing unit must be provided.

ELECTRICAL

This section of the permit application is intended to gain information regarding electrical power supply and distribution plans that you propose to use at your event.

There are a number of local and state codes related to the use and distribution of electrical power. As an event organizer you are required to meet or exceed these codes and regulations. Failure to meet local and state codes may result in penalties or suspension of the use of the wiring or equipment until the corrective action is verified. It is illegal to use electricity tapped from public lights and other public utility outlets. The following section has been developed to provide you with general requirements regarding the use of electrical power.

Electrical and Power Supply

If your event includes provisions to supply electrical power via generators, photovoltaic (solar) systems, or by connecting to existing permanent electrical systems, an electrical permit may be required by the Building Inspection Division of the Planning and Development Department. An electrical permit is required for electric power generating equipment 25 volts and higher. Existing city maintained lighting and outlet circuits may not be used for event power use unless prior approval is obtained in writing before the event date and time. In some cases, electrical distribution plans and load calculations prepared by a Texas State licensed Master electrical contractor or electrical engineer may be required. Electrical inspection is required on or before the event date and time.

You can obtain an electrical permit application at 505 Barton Springs Road, Austin Texas 78704 or call 512 974-2027. There may be a Commercial Plan Review Required for this type of permit and a review may take an extended amount of time to process and an inspector may not be immediately available, therefore, please plan accordingly.

Whether or not an electrical permit is required for your event, the installation of all electrical elements must comply with the requirements of the most recent NFPA 70 the National Electrical Code as amended by the City of Austin Electrical Code.

All wiring, equipment and devices must be maintained in a safe working condition for the duration of your event including set-up and dismantle.

Small hand portable generators with direct connect outlets do not typically need to receive electrical permits from the City of Austin. In instances where an electrical permit is not required, the Fire Marshal will conduct an on-site inspection to ensure the use of proper system grounding, GFCI protected outlets, protection of wiring, protection of pedestrians from trip hazards, etc.

REQUIREMENTS

EQUIPMENT

- Must be listed for the location of installation (e.g. indoor or outdoor, etc.).
- Equipment in outdoor locations must be NEMA 3R rated.
- Outlets and luminaries (fixtures) must be approved for wet or damp location as appropriate.
- Distribution and power generation equipment must not be accessible to the general public or nonqualified personnel.
- Sufficient protection should be used to cover all cords, wires, hoses, etc. located within a path of travel, or subject to physical-damage.
- An alternate accessible path of travel is required when the public right-of-way is obstructed.

RECEPTACLES

- Must be protected by overcurrent protection devices at their listed ampacity.
- Must be Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) protected as required in section 525.23 of the National Electrical Code

- Supplying equipment must be inaccessible to the general public.

EXTENSION CORDS

- Must be protected at their listed ampacity.
- Must be wet or damp location listed as needed
- Must be sunlight resistant as needed.
- Must be routed outside of pedestrian and vehicular traffic or suitably protected or guarded.
- Must be listed for extra hard usage; single conductor is acceptable as required in the National Electric Code.
- Must be supported as needed; supports must not cause damage to the cord.
- Must be continuous without splice between boxes and fittings.
- Cord connectors must not be laid on the ground, unless listed for wet locations.
- Connectors must not be placed in areas accessible to the public, unless guarded.

LIGHTING

- Electrical lamps and lighting equipment must be kept away from combustible equipment.
- All lamps must be protected from accidental contact or breakage by means of a suitable fixture type or lamp holder with guard.
- Egress lighting must not be protected by a GFCI.
- Required egress lighting and exit signs must not be on the same circuit as general use receptacles or decorative lighting.

PORTABLE DISTRIBUTION BOXES

- When installed outdoors, must be wet location listed and mounted so that the enclosure is not less than six inches (6") above the ground, and protected from physical damage.
- Boxes must be designed to ensure no live parts are exposed to accidental contact.
- Must be properly labeled identifying use of circuit.

EQUIPMENT BONDING

- Equipment connected to the same source must be bonded.
- Examples include; metallic raceways and metal sheathed cables, metal enclosures of electrical equipment, metal frames and metal parts of rides, concessions, tents, trailers, trucks, stages, or other equipment that contain or support electrical equipment.

EQUIPMENT GROUNDING

- All equipment requiring grounding, and/or bonding must be installed in accordance with Article 250 of the National Electric Code Section 525.30 through 525.32.

PORTABLE AND VEHICLE-MOUNTED GENERATORS

- Must be listed for the use.

- Must be grounded unless generators meet the criteria of sections 250.34(A) and (B) of the National Electrical Code.
- Must use the identified grounding point on the generator.
- Must be properly guarded to avoid contact by the general public and nonqualified personnel.
- Reference NEC Section 590.6(A)(3) for generators 15-KW or less.

GROUND RODS

- Must be fully driven in accordance with NEC Section 250.52(A)(5) and Section 250.53(G).
- Listed grounding clamps are required.
- Must be properly guarded to avoid contact by the general public.

OVERHEAD CONDUCTORS

- Must have vertical clearance to ground in compliance with the National Electric Code (section 225.18 and 225.19).
- Amusement rides and attractions require a minimum fifteen feet (15') in any direction to conductors operating at 600V or less (except those supplying the ride or attraction).
- Amusement rides and attractions shall not be located under or within 15 feet horizontally of conductors operating in excess of 600V.

If you need more information you may contact the Building Inspection Division of Planning Development Review at (512) 974-2027, or the Special Events office at (512) 974-1000.